

Maryland and Virginia. Here they took refuge in old forts, but the Senecas continued to pursue them. Remnants of the tribe finally submitted to the Five Nations and were allowed to return to their old territory on the Susquehanna River. Here they dwelt for nearly a hundred years, a weak and dwindling people.

In 1763 massacres committed on the borders by the Indians excited the white settlers against all Indians. A few survivors of the Susquehannock tribe took refuge in Lancaster jail where they were cruelly put to death by a mob, thus ending a brave and high spirited people.

Rangers Protect White Settlers

By the latter part of the seventeenth century, white settlers were beginning to push northward and continued to meet resistance from the scattered groups of Indians who resented encroachment upon their hunting grounds.

As a means of protection and the prevention of pilferage and destruction, Governor Copley, in 1692, ordered the organization of a Company of Rangers to police the wilderness against the roving bands of Indians still remaining in the territory. This order resulted in the establishment of a line called "Ranger's Road," extending from a principal fort at Garrison Forest in Baltimore County to the Susquehanna River.⁴

A report to the Governor on October 9, 1697 by Capt. Brightwell, Commander of the Rangers, describes this line of defense as "extending 40 miles from our garrison; to the main Gunpowder, 12 miles; thence to Little Falls, 8 miles; thence to a branch of Winter's Run, 8 miles; thence to the north side of Deer Creek, 12 miles; and thence to the nearest inhabitants, 16 miles." From this report it is evident that many Indians at that date were still making use of the lands of upper Harford and Baltimore Counties as hunting grounds and for temporary homes. Capt. Brightwell wrote, "We have ranged and made discovery of all good lands back of our road and found a great many Indian cabins."

For their shelter and protection, the Rangers built several cabins or forts along this line. While descriptions of these are scanty, it is believed that they were either wooden or rough stone structures with very crude facilities for comfort.

There is no doubt that at least two of these outposts were located in Harford County. The first was situated on the little stream called Bear Cabin Branch which empties into Winter's Run near Vale. From the

⁴ William B. Marye, "The Baltimore County Garrison," MARYLAND HISTORICAL MAGAZINE, Vol. 16, page 132.

description given by Rangers, it was located "Ten miles northeast of Little Falls and ten miles by road southwest of the last cabin on Deer Creek."

Dr. George W. Archer in his unpublished notes on Harford County history believes every description verifies the location on Bear Cabin Branch and that this stream got its name from that fact.⁵ As further evidence that the name originated from the Rangers' cabin is the fact that its earliest occurrence is in a survey about that date of 600 acres called "Ewing's Luck," described as a piece of low spring ground by the mouth of a branch called Bear Cabin Branch. Ten years earlier, in 1690, Baltimore County Records indicate that the English had no name for this stream.⁶

The exact location of another outpost in Harford which was on or near Deer Creek is unknown. Again Dr. Archer believes it may have been between Dublin and Broad Creek, somewhere near a stream called Green Coat Cabin Branch. Mr. Mason believes it was located on Bald Hill above Bald Friar ford and ferry.⁷ In describing the above line of defense, Judge Preston relates that the Susquehanna Fort was commanded by Captain Thomas L. Richardson but gives no information as to its location.

Besides this regular line of defense tradition tells us that other outposts existed in northern Baltimore and Harford Counties. One of these was located near the site of the present Bethel Church.

Just what effect the establishment of these forts had on the departure of Indians from our soil is conjectural, but by 1750 the last scattered remnants of that proud nation had disappeared.

Petroglyphs Found Along Susquehanna

In 1916 Martin G. Kurtz, of Jarrettsville, and William B. Marye, of the Maryland Historical Society, made an investigation of some petroglyphs or "rock writing" found on rocks located in the Susquehanna River near Bald Friar. The markings were deep indentations carved by a previous race of people, possibly Indians. Photographs were made by Mr. Kurtz of these interesting petroglyphs so that they might be preserved for future study.

Petroglyphs were found on islands in the Susquehanna, the most significant ones being those on Duck Island, Catten Rock, and Indian Rock. Before the flooding of these islands by the construction of the Conowingo Dam in 1927, several of these petroglyphs were removed from the rocks of the river by the Maryland Academy of Sciences and reassembled for preservation at that institution.

⁵ George W. Archer, Harford Historical Collection at the Maryland Historical Society.

⁶ Baltimore County Land Records, Liber W. S., No. 4, page 35.

⁷ Samuel Mason, HISTORICAL SKETCHES OF HARFORD COUNTY, page 42.



Courtesy of Martin G. Kurtz

PETROGLYPHS AT BALD FRIAR



Courtesy of Martin G. Kurtz

PETROGLYPHS AT BALD FRIAR

Chapter 3

Settlement

AS FAR AS is known, no other white men visited the region of the upper Chesapeake Bay for about fifteen years after Captain Smith made his important exploration in 1608. As the Virginia territory and the southern section of Lord Baltimore's domain became more thickly settled, a few colonists, lured by the expanses of virgin lands, gradually drifted northward along the coastal areas. There is, however, no record of any permanent occupancy of the region at the head of the Bay for almost fifty years after Smith's journey.

It was not until 1700 that much of the territory further inland was cleared and bold pioneers established their homes on the former Indian hunting grounds of northern Harford.

Palmer's Island

At the head of the Bay near the mouth of the Susquehanna River is situated a small island originally called Palmer's Island. It was here that the first settlement in the upper bay region was made by an adventurous and wealth-seeking young Englishman by the name of Edward Palmer.

It is thought that the first actual settlement on this island was made by Palmer and a few of his associates about the year 1622, predating the settlement of Claiborne on Kent Island by about ten years. Palmer evidently had learned of the exploration by Captain Smith, and being encouraged by the glowing description of that early explorer, decided to risk his future and establish a fur trading post in a spot where he could trade with Indian trappers to the north. This location was also accessible by water to other trading posts on the Bay and rivers further to the south.

Mr. Palmer, an educated eccentric, is said to have had visions of the establishment of a university on the island. From what source he expected to draw his students is unknown, presumably from the Virginia territory or perhaps from his hope of further settlement of the adjoining regions. His dream of establishing such an institution died in infancy, and the only evidence that it ever existed was a few books found there when Lord Baltimore took over the island in 1637.

Definite information as to the size of the settlement is not available, some placing it as high as 200 men. This, however, is only conjecture and